

Kindness and Gentleness

Bible Reflection and Prayer Guide

by Glen Elliott



We are in a teaching series called **Manifest**. We called it Manifest because the word means to display, show or make clear. We are to manifest God's presence and fruit in our lives. So in this series, we are looking at the nine characteristics that make up the fruit of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23).

This guide looks at two characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit - **kindness and gentleness**. The purpose in this series is not just to try harder at being kind and gentle; the source of the fruit in our lives is the Spirit. So, I'm asking you to invite the Spirit to transform you. As you surrender, submit and cooperate with the Holy Spirit, he will ripen and mature the fruit of the Spirit in you.

How do we cooperate with and invite the Spirit to grow and mature this fruit in us? We use the same methods and practices Jesus used. The three primary spiritual practices Jesus engaged in were prayer, Bible reflection, and fasting. I want to encourage you to do some Bible reflection and prayer regarding the two fruits of the Spirit - kindness and gentleness.

This guide has scriptures to reflect upon and questions to guide your thoughts and prayers. Don't see this guide as just homework to get done. Use it to help you truly invite the Spirit to speak into you and for him to do his transforming work. You can do this reflective work and prayer in one sitting or spread it out over several days. Take your time with each scripture. Let the scripture guide your prayers. All scriptures are NIV unless noted.

Kindness

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- Prayerfully reflect and celebrate how God has been kind, compassionate, and forgiving toward you.
- Think of someone with whom you have some tension right now. How can you be kind and compassionate to them?
- What does “kindness” look like?

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as God's chosen people,
holy and dearly loved,
clothe yourselves with compassion,
kindness, humility, gentleness
and patience.

- Given that God has a special purpose for you (God's chosen people), you are to be holy (like Jesus), and because you are deeply loved, he moves you to put on the five characteristics listed. How are compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience connected (note that all but humility are listed as fruit of the Spirit)?
- Why does Paul say to "clothe" yourselves with these character qualities? Why did he use this analogy?
- Reflect and share with God how you've experienced compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience from God.



1 Corinthians 13:4

Love is patient, love is kind.

- Again, three of the fruits of the Spirit are listed here. How is kindness an aspect of love?

Luke 6:35

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.

Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

- How is God kind to the ungrateful and wicked?
- God is kind to those difficult to love. We are to do likewise. Who is hard to love, and how can you be kind to them?

Proverbs 11:17

Those who are kind benefit themselves, but the cruel bring ruin on themselves.

- How does being kind benefit us?
- Being cruel or harsh is the opposite of kindness. When you are not being kind, how does your harshness manifest itself? What does it do to others? Do you need to repent of being harsh toward someone?

Romans 2:4

Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? (NLT)

- Have you truly experienced and embraced God's kindness? How will it manifest itself in who you are and how you live?

Gentleness

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

- How do you see and/or experience Jesus' gentleness? What does that look like for you?
- How does Jesus' gentle and humble character give us rest? What does that rest look like?

Titus 3:1, 2

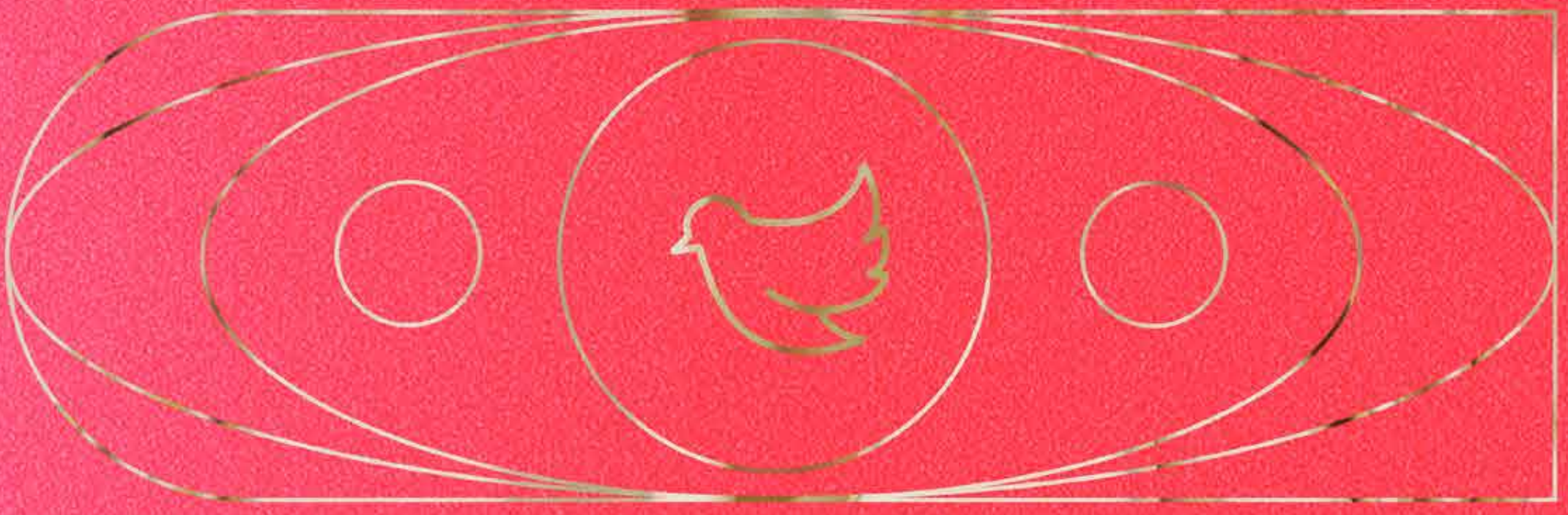
Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

- What does it look like to be gentle to anyone and everyone?
- How is it possible for this gentleness to always be present and active?

Philippians 4:5

Let your gentleness be evident to all.
The Lord is near.

- What does the Lord being near have to do with letting our gentleness show to all? How does the nearness of Jesus affect having a character of gentleness?
- How will you let others experience your gentleness? How can it be “evident?”



Manifest

the evidence of the Spirit

